



## How to Contact Your Elected Officials

**Is this a Federal matter?** Example: Medicare high level issues, eligibility or premiums, Part D plan structure (regulation of plans), Contact U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative

<https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member> (Search by address)

**Is this a State matter?** Example: Medicaid high level issues, eligibility requirements, estate recovery, Part D prescription drug costs (what can be done within our State about high drug costs), SeniorCare positive or negative comments, Contact Wisconsin State Senators and Assembly Representatives

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov> (Search by address)

## Contacting Your State Legislators - Things to keep in mind:

- You are helping them do their job by informing them how these bills could impact you.
- The best way to let your legislator know how you feel about any bill is to share a specific personal story they will remember.
- Most legislators want to get to know you and see you as a resource.
- If a legislator hears from 5 to 7 constituents about a topic, they pay attention.
- Be specific and clear
- Stay focused, stay on topic
- Know the bill number you are referring to
- It's ok to disagree with their position but don't argue
- If you don't know the answer to a question, don't guess! Just tell them you will follow up with the answer.
- You can provide 1 or 2 brief handouts if they emphasize your points. Know what's on the handout.
- Be clear about your 'ask' and set deadlines for getting a response back from their office.
- Follow up if you don't hear by that deadline
- Be persistent.
- Send a Thank You note

- Meet with them in person (or Zoom)
- Meet Legislators in their home district (see office locations online)
- Meetings are generally set for 20 minutes or less
- Send an email or letter
- Try to avoid a form letter or make sure you personalize it with your story to make it stand out.
- Call their office. It's ok to ask your legislator to call you back and ok to just talk to the staffer
- No matter how you contact your legislator, be sure to give your name, address and hometown so they can verify you are a constituent.

## **Types of Advocacy:**

### Positive contact

- Letting a legislator know they are pleased with the services of the ADRC, EBS or DBS
- Thanking a legislator for supporting a certain policy or public service
- Sharing personal stories of positive impact of policies or legislative action

### Negative or Critical Contact

- Explaining how policy or proposed policy might negatively impact the constituent or population group
- Sharing personal stories of negative impact of policies or legislative action
- Be Respectful! Even if you disagree